

Proposed Changes for Maryland Toll Facilities

The Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA), the State agency that owns, finances, operates and maintains Maryland's toll facilities, proposed to increase toll rates for its toll facilities on June 2, 2011. The proposed toll rates would be phased in as follows:

Facility	Passenger Cars/Light Trucks (Two-axle Vehicles)			
	Effective	Commuters ^{1,2}	E-ZPass MD ¹	Cash/Base ³
Baltimore Harbor Tunnel (I-895)	Current Toll	\$0.40	\$2.00	\$2.00
Fort McHenry Tunnel (I-95, I-395)	10/1/2011	\$0.90	\$2.70	\$3.00
Francis Scott Key Bridge (I-695) (Two-way toll collection)	7/1/2013	\$1.40	\$3.60	\$4.00
John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway (I-95)	Current Toll	\$0.80	\$5.00	\$5.00
Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge (US 40) (One-way toll collection)	10/1/2011	\$1.80	\$5.40	\$6.00
	7/1/2013	\$2.80	\$7.20	\$8.00
William Preston Lane, Jr. Memorial (Bay) Bridge (US 50/301) (One-way toll collection)	Current Toll	\$1.00	\$2.50	\$2.50
	10/1/2011	\$1.50	\$4.50	\$5.00
	7/1/2013	\$2.80	\$7.20	\$8.00
Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge (US 301) (One-way toll collection)	Current Toll	\$0.60	\$3.00	\$3.00
	10/1/2011	\$1.50	\$4.50	\$5.00
	7/1/2013	\$2.80	\$7.20	\$8.00

Facility	Effective	Vehicles with Three or More Axles			
		3-axle Cash/E-ZPass ⁴	4-axle Cash/E-ZPass ⁴	5-axle Cash/E-ZPass ⁴	6+-axle Cash/E-ZPass ⁴
Baltimore Harbor Tunnel (I-895)	Current Toll	\$6.00	\$9.00	\$12.00	\$15.00
Fort McHenry Tunnel (I-95, I-395)	1/1/2012	\$9.00	\$14.00	\$18.00	\$23.00
Francis Scott Key Bridge (I-695) (Two-way toll collection)	7/1/2013	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$24.00	\$30.00
John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway (I-95)	Current Toll	\$15.00	\$23.00	\$30.00	\$38.00
Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge (US 40) (One-way toll collection)	1/1/2012	\$18.00	\$27.00	\$36.00	\$45.00
	7/1/2013	\$24.00	\$36.00	\$48.00	\$60.00
William Preston Lane, Jr. Memorial (Bay) Bridge (US 50/301) (One-way toll collection)	Current Toll	\$9.00	\$12.00	\$15.00	\$18.00
	1/1/2012	\$15.00	\$23.00	\$30.00	\$38.00
	7/1/2013	\$24.00	\$36.00	\$48.00	\$60.00
Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge (US 301) (One-way toll collection)	Current Toll	\$9.00	\$12.00	\$15.00	\$18.00
	1/1/2012	\$15.00	\$23.00	\$30.00	\$38.00
	7/1/2013	\$24.00	\$36.00	\$48.00	\$60.00

Other Components of Tolling Plan Proposal:

- Provide a 10% discount off the two-axle Cash/Base rate to *E-ZPass* Maryland customers. This discount is new and being proposed by the MDTA Board as a benefit to *E-ZPass* Maryland customers.
- Replace the \$3 Notice of Toll Due fee with a Video Toll rate⁵ that is 25% above the Cash/Base rate.
- For the Intercounty Connector (ICC)/MD 200, replace the \$3 Notice of Toll Due fee with Video Toll rate⁵ ranges that are 25% above the current rate ranges.
- Eliminate the Shoppers Program at the Bay Bridge.
- Eliminate the ticket programs at the Hatem Bridge.

- Replace the \$10 AVI Decal at the Hatem Bridge with an *E-ZPass* Maryland Unlimited Plan that provides unlimited trips for \$36 per year (effective 10/1/2011) and \$72 per year (effective 7/1/2013).⁶
- Effective 1/1/2012, reduce post-usage discounts for *E-ZPass* Maryland business accounts to 10%, 15% and 20%.

¹ *E-ZPass* Maryland accounts with properly mounted transponder only.

² Uniform 70% discount off the two-axle cash/base rate (65% effective July 1, 2013).

³ Cash tolls are the base rate for each vehicle/axle class.

⁴ Cash/*E-ZPass* tolls for vehicles with three or more axles are based on the two-axle base rate times the appropriate multiplier rounded up to the nearest dollar.

⁵ A Video Toll rate is assessed when a driver travels through a toll plaza without a valid *E-ZPass* or cash payment or travels the ICC without a valid *E-ZPass*.

⁶ *E-ZPass* monthly account fee and transponder cost would apply.

Toll increases will meet vital transportation needs

Faced with significant costs to rehabilitate aging infrastructure and also with the need to construct additional highway capacity in the Baltimore and Washington regions, the Chairman and eight Board Members of Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) have proposed a plan to raise tolls. Additional revenue is needed to meet vital transportation needs such as:

- \$132 million in repairs for the Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge (US 40)
- \$121 million in work for the John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway (I-95)
- \$225 million in repairs to the William Preston Lane Jr. Memorial (Bay) Bridge (US 50/301)
- \$410 million in work for the Fort McHenry (I-95, I-395) and Baltimore Harbor (I-895) tunnels and Francis Scott Key Bridge (I-695)
- \$21 million in repairs to the Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge (US 301)

In addition, the MDTA is constructing two major projects to address traffic congestion in Maryland – the I-95 Express Toll Lanes in the Baltimore region and the Intercounty Connector in the Washington region. Toll increases will be phased-in over a 3-year period (2011, 2012 and 2013).

MDTA is self-funded with revenues generated almost entirely through tolls

Funds to operate, preserve, maintain, improve and protect Maryland's eight toll facilities come directly from the tolls that customers pay – not the State's Transportation Trust Fund or General Fund. The MDTA combines toll revenue from all facilities to pay operating costs and the debt on bonds that are issued for major projects. Revenue "pooling" makes MDTA financially strong, with top bond ratings that reduce borrowing costs.

Toll increases have been delayed as long as possible

MDTA has actively managed operating costs in an effort to stretch existing dollars for needed maintenance expenses. The MDTA Board has scaled back projects and reduced expenses in order to delay an increase in tolls as long as possible. Delaying is no longer an option. Additional revenue is required to keep pace with the cost of constructing and maintaining MDTA facilities.

Toll rates have been static for many years

It has been years, decades in some cases, since the MDTA raised many of its toll rates. Commuter toll rates were last raised in 1985 for Baltimore Harbor crossings and in 1983 for the Bay, Nice and Hatem Bridges and the JFK Highway. Toll rates for passenger vehicles were last raised in 2003 at the Baltimore toll facilities, the Kennedy Highway and the Hatem Bridge and in 2001 at the Nice Bridge. The Bay Bridge toll rate for passenger vehicles is lower now than when the original span opened in 1952, when drivers of passenger cars paid \$2.80 round trip, plus \$0.25 per passenger. Toll rates for vehicles with three or more axles were last raised at all facilities in 2009.

Proposed plan offers generous discounts

The proposed plan enables Maryland to offer some of the most generous discounts in the country and keep overall toll rates comparable with those elsewhere in the region.

- E-ZPass Maryland: Passenger vehicles with a valid E-ZPass Maryland account and transponder will receive a 10% discount off the cash/base toll rate
- Facility Discount Plans: Customers who sign up for a discount plan and have a valid E-ZPass Maryland account and transponder will receive a 70% discount off the cash/base toll rate (discount will be reduced to 65% off the cash/base toll rate on July 1, 2013)
- ICC/MD 200: Discounts are based on time of day
- E-ZPass Maryland Business Accounts: Effective January 1, 2012, post-usage discounts will be reduced to 10%, 15% and 20%. The Supplemental Rebate Plan remains unchanged at an additional 10% discount for 100 or more trips made per month using a single E-ZPass Maryland transponder at eligible facilities

Submit your comments on the proposed plan

Comments may be submitted for the official record by 5 p.m. on August 1, 2011, by visiting **www.mdtamaryland.gov**; writing to MDTA Toll Comment, 2310 Broening Highway, Baltimore, MD, 21224; or attending a public hearing.

The MDTA Board plans to consider the matter for final action in a public meeting later this summer. The meeting details and approved tolling plan will be posted to **www.mdtamaryland.gov**.